NUDGE DESIGN CANVAS

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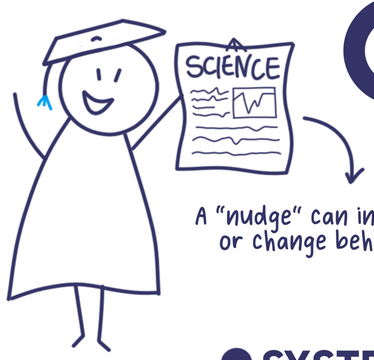
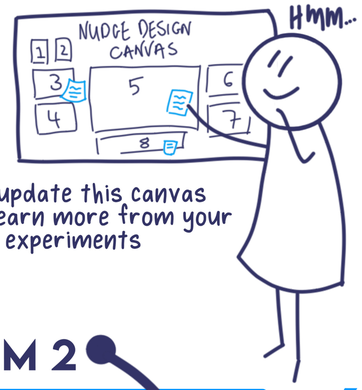
START



A "nudge" can influence or change behavior

you can use nudges to encourage desired behavior

revisit and update this canvas often as you learn more from your nudge experiments



A nudge is any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudges are not mandates. Putting fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not [1]

1 What is the problem you are trying to solve?

- People are staying late in the office and we think the overtime contributes to burnout

2 What is the goal? What does success look like?

- We shouldn't have people work overtime.
- The amount of people in the office after hours should go down by 50%

NOW

3 What current observable behaviors stand in the way of the goal?

- People are staying late
- Leaving early is perceived as 'bad' or 'lazy'
- People are always online on Teams
- Overtime is seen as 'commitment'
- Overtime is seen as 'normal'

FUTURE

4 What future observable behaviors would contribute to reaching the goal?

- It's assumed you're productive, regardless of where you work
- Communicating your limits is seen as positive
- Not being online all the time is normal
- Overtime is an exception that calls for intervention
- Leaving 'early' doesn't exist, coming and going at any time is normal

what do I need people to do?

SYSTEM 1

SYSTEM 2

5 List all the elements that you can see that...

...make the current behaviors unconsciously easy?

- Everyone else is online as well
- The lights stay on all the time
- Office phone means you get emails/messages any time of day
- Overtime is never communicated as a problem
- Amenities remain available until late

is it status to do?

...promote or reward the current behaviors?

- Your team is in the office with you, late work has a social element
- Your boss can see you work late, and they do your performance review
- People at the top work extreme hours, so it's seen as part of success
- People with lots of overtime are publicly praised for their commitment'

money? status? recognition?

...make the future behaviors unconsciously difficult?

- With work phone and work laptop, home doesn't mean 'away from work.' You might as well be in the office
- Productivity is measured as utilisation, and it's hard to look busy at home
- Being the only person with limits makes you the exception
- Your online state is always visible
- The communication is about work still to be done, not outcome achieved
- All the 'hero' stories are about people meeting deadlines under stress
- Open office plan makes what you do very visible

...currently discourage or punish the desired future behaviors?

- There is office gossip about 'slackers'
- Productivity is measured in utilisation and amount of stuff done
- A '9-5 mentality' is communicated during recruitment as 'not wanted'

BAD MANAGER

don't come to me with problems!

6 How could we make the undesirable behavior more difficult?

- Overtime could be coached against during performance reviews
- People at the top clearly communicate the importance of off-time for their careers
- Overall utilization and overtime is communicated as something problematic that requires limits
- Turn off the coffee machines at 16:30
- Turn off the lights and heating in the office at 17:30

can we remove incentives? make it more time consuming? make it less easy?

7 How could we make the future desirable behavior easier?

- Make leaving early less visible
- Turn off email and teams notifications after office hours
- People are praised for saying 'no' and respecting limits
- Communicate and measure outcomes
- 'Hero' stories should be about people achieving great outcomes with low effort
- Switch to team rooms instead of an open office plan

System 1 is our automatic system. It's very fast, unconscious, and most people experience it as instinctive. It's low energy, and does not involve 'thinking'. It uses patterns to navigate the world. Most of our time is spent in System 1. System 2 is only activated when System 1 runs into issues. Examples include catching a ball, looking away from people in an elevator and accepting EULA's.

System 2 is our reflective system. It's deliberate, slow and high energy. It's what we associate with 'thinking', it's self-conscious. It deals with the exceptions that System 1 can't handle. Due to its high energy cost, humans are optimized to minimize the time spent using it. Examples include logical reasoning, making a budget, planning your next holiday and parking into a tight spot.

8 Design a nudge using the statement below and your insights from box 5-7

We are going to implement this nudge for this period of tim
ks by mea this o ble indicat

- We are going to place a coatrack out of sight so it's less visible when you intend to leave. We will inspect this nudge after 2 weeks. We will know it works by counting a reduction of people in the office after 17:00
- We are going to turn off email notifications by default after 17:00. We will inspect this nudge after 1 week. We will know it works by measuring a reduction in email-traffic between 17:00 and 9:00.
- We are going to show employees as offline by default after 17:00. We will inspect this nudge after 1 week. We will know it works by measuring a reduction in messages and calls between 17:00 and 9:00.
- We are going to turn off the coffee machine after 16:30. We will inspect this nudge after 2 weeks. We will know it works by counting a reduction of people in the office after 17:00.

make sure you specify measurable and observable indicators to evaluate the nudge before and after the experiment

repeat and revise

FINISH

Prosilience

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Illustrated by Maura Leusder

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[1] Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). Nudge. Van Haren Publishing.
[2] Kahneman, D. (2012). Thinking, Fast and Slow. Penguin.